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ABSTRACT

To explore the quality of the basic course in speech communication it is useful to examine the role of graduate teaching assistants (GTA) and undergraduate teaching assistants (UTA). The first goal was to search the literature for information concerning the use (or lack thereof) of GTAs and UTAs and to explore the potential benefits and drawbacks to their use in the basic course in speech communication. The second goal was to propose a model using GTAs and UTAs to maximize the effectiveness of instruction in the basic course. Cost-effective instruction, efficient use of faculty time, more personalized instruction, benefits to the students, increase in department majors/minors, and personal and career growth for the GTAs and UTAs all make the use of GTAs and UTAs desirable in the basic course. An extensive use of both GTAs and UTAs was not found through the literature review. Some of the benefits of the proposed model, based on the Personalized System of Instruction (PSI) model, included being cost-effective, increasing the involvement of the faculty and administrators, and having a systematic structure to help insure that change would not adversely affect the quality of the basic course. Research has shown that this model has helped integrate GTAs, UTAs, and interns into basic courses and suggests that the students are learning more and are more satisfied with this integration. (Forty-two references are appended.) (MS)

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"Integrating the Graduate, Undergraduate and Education Curricula: Training Qualified Staff for the Basic Course"

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Integrating the Graduate, Undergraduate and Education Curricula: Training Qualified Staff for the Basic Course

Improving the quality of the basic course in speech communication has remained a concern for the field for many years. Long ago White reminded us that concern regarding the objectives and nature of the first course in speech "antedates the formation in November, 1914, of the National Association of Academic Teachers of Public Speaking, and since that time has been a perennial subject for articles in our journals and papers at regional and national meetings" (White, Minnick, Van Dusen & Lewis, 1954, p. 163). The same concern is alive and well today. Research has shown clearly that the health of departments and even the field as a whole is dependent on keeping the basic course a quality offering (Gibson & Hanna, 1986). It would be reasonable to believe that, as society changes, the need for changes to take place in the basic course to keep it a meaningful and effective offering is there. However, there is reason to believe that any real changes in the basic course come slowly, if at all (Gray, 1984; Trank, 1985). Trank (1985) states this opinion clearly: "Some programs will continue to experiment with innovative approaches, with different emphases and content, and with alternate delivery systems. But for most of the colleges and universities which offer a basic course, it will continue to be, in spite of a lack of meaningful supportive data and in the face of legitimate criticism, business as usual" (p. 87).

The purpose of this research was to look at one aspect of the basic course in speech communication at universities granting graduate degrees in this field that seems to be responding to this needed change: the use of graduate (GTA) and undergraduate (UTA) teaching assistants as instructors/facilitators in the basic course. The first goal was to search the literature for information concerning the use (or lack thereof) of GTAs and UTAs and to explore the potential benefits and drawbacks to their use in the basic course in speech communication. The second goal was to propose a model using GTAs and UTAs to maximize the effectiveness of instruction in the basic course.

The Use of Graduate Teaching Assistants

The use of GTAs as instructors in the basic course in speech communication is widespread. Gibson, Hanna and Huddleston (1985), in the latest national survey of colleges and universities sponsored by the Speech Communication Association, found that GTAs account for 18% of the instruction in the basic course. Since this survey included many institutions with no graduate programs, the percentage of sections of the basic course taught by graduate students at institutions offering graduate degrees would be much higher. This and other research indicates that GTAs have become an indispensable part of the instructional program for many colleges and universities (Jackson & Simpson, 1983; Staton-Spicer & Nyquist, 1979; Carroll, 1980). The use of GTAs provides many benefits to the departments, the basic course students, and the GTAs.

For the department, the use of GTAs adds flexibility to meet departmental needs. "Teaching assistants provide valuable services both as supporting staff and as primary instructors. The role of the GTA may be as limited as that of a paper grader or as broad as that of a part-time faculty" (Jackson, 1985, p. 288). In many departments in our field, GTAs are used as the primary instructor of one or more sections of the basic course (DeBoer, 1979; Jackson & Simpson, 1983). This provides an inexpensive and needed work force (Jackson, 1985). More sections of the basic course can be offered with the same financial base since GTAs are paid less than part-time or full-time faculty. The use of GTAs frees faculty to teach upper-level courses, conduct research and/or perform service functions such as advising, committee work, etc.

The use of GTAs may bring some benefits to the basic course students, too. Many departments attempt to standardize the basic course to help insure that their basic-level competency course is achieving a common set of goals across sections. Using GTAs can aid in such standardization since less experienced instructors under scrutiny may make it easier to achieve such standardization than would the use of more experienced instructors with a diverse background and less commonality of ideas as to appropriate approaches to the basic course (DeBoer, 1979). In addition, the use of GTAs may provide the students with some direct benefits. "Teaching assistants are probably more accessible than regular faculty and are often more empathetic to students' problems. Although GTAs do not have the teaching experience of senior faculty, they many times have the infectious enthusiasm for their fields characteristic of new professionals" (Jackson, 1985, p. 288).

Benefits from the use of GTAs extend to the GTAs themselves, too. With the high cost of graduate education, many students could not work for

graduate degrees without some financial aid, preferably a form which will not require money to be paid back. "In departments where funded research assistantships are limited or nonexistent the teaching assistantship provides an important vehicle for attracting and supporting graduate students" (Jackson, 1985, pp. 289-290). In addition to financial rewards, or even necessities, GTAs may benefit personally as well. In the field of speech communication, many people with graduate degrees will enter professions which require some form of human resource development (teaching, personnel, consulting, human resource management, etc.). Therefore, experience teaching at the college level is an invaluable way to train for a future career. Even if some form of "teaching" will not be used directly in a career, skills learned in such an assignment almost certainly will be used: conflict-resolution, organizing messages, managing time, audience analysis, etc. (Jackson, 1985).

With so many benefits associated with using GTAs, it is not surprising that institutions of higher learning continue to rely on this resource. However, there are some problems involved with the use of GTAs. Specifically, GTAs may have a lack of credibility, a lack of knowledge of content, a lack of teaching skills, and/or a poor attitude toward teaching.

The lack of credibility may be the first obstacle a GTA must overcome. Certainly many of us who have served as GTAs can remember at least one sour expression often accompanied by an audible sigh when students realized on the first day of class that they would have a "grad' ass'" as an instructor. There is little that can be done about this it would seem. However, it is possible that few problems in the other areas, knowledge, skills, and attitude, may help dispel a negative initial perception.

The lack of experience of many GTAs, especially at the Master's level, can provide a group of enthusiastic teachers but teachers also lacking in knowledge. Certainly no amount of enthusiasm and availability will make up for a lack of knowledge of the subject matter and/or instructional methods. Some GTAs enter graduate school with only a minor in our field, which could mean as few as approximately six courses in speech communication; there are even cases where students enter graduate school in speech communication with virtually no background in our field but with an emphasis in a "related" field such as English, psychology, etc. These students well may lack much expertise in the subject matter of our field.

In addition, few of these graduate students may have had any reason to consider ways to enhance learning through a variety of instructional techniques much less had any formal training in teaching prior to becoming GTAs (DeBoer, 1979). Since such young and inexperienced teachers may enter the classroom with a lower credibility in the eyes of the students than would regular faculty members, even small errors may be taken as a

sign that the students are not getting quality instruction. Hostility that might be created in such a situation could tax the skills of even an experienced teacher; an inexperienced GTA might fall apart.

Additionally, many GTAs lack skills for effective classroom management. Learning how to be consistent with policy yet make needed judgment calls, learning how to apply criteria fairly in a grading situation, learning how to diffuse anger and handle conflict, learning how to increase classroom interaction, etc. are all dependent on more than just cognitive knowledge. Applying such knowledge in a real-life situation takes time and practice. With many graduate programs lasting only from one to three years, time is not something that is in great supply.

Lack of knowledge and skills can be compounded by the potential negative attitude some GTAs have toward their teaching responsibilities. Some GTAs feel that their real job in graduate school is to do well in courses and research. This puts teaching in a relatively unimportant position and becomes a necessary evil for financial reasons. Many faculty may reinforce this attitude consciously or subconsciously. Whether this potentially low placement of teaching in the priority system of a GTA is right or wrong is not the issue; what is important is that it could have a negative effect on the quality of instruction in the basic course.

Certainly a panacea to overcoming these problems is not in the offing. However, a few obvious solutions come to mind: screening and training/supervision (Baisinger, Peterson, & Spillman, 1984). First, screening potential GTAs could be helpful. While many students may not have had direct teaching experience, other activities could have provided some parallel situations which could heighten the possibility of some skill-building taking place before becoming a GTA: tutoring, being a club officer, summer employment, competing in team activities, volunteer work, etc. could all provide situations somewhat analogous to teaching experience. Letters of recommendation can provide useful insights into a person's previous record of accomplishments and skills. Even scrutinizing transcripts for previous coursework can be helpful. Courses outside of our field, such as courses in education, psychology, English, etc., may have application to our field.

Screening could provide two benefits to the department. First, it could be used to prioritize students for acceptance on assistantships. Of course, the usefulness of such screening would be dependent on the commitment of the faculty to give a priority to those who appear most qualified to teach the basic course when deciding on assistantships. Many departments may not want the quality of their graduate program to be dependent on this as a major criterion, especially since a lack of related experiences, etc. may say nothing at all about the potential effectiveness of a GTA in a classroom. Second, screening of this kind could provide a focus for a training program that might take place prior to or concurrent

with their initial teaching assignment.

Perhaps the most important way to begin to solve some of the problems discussed is through the second possible answer to the problems cited: training and supervision of GTAs. Research has shown a wide variety of training techniques used to prepare GTAs for their teaching assignments, varying from "hi, here's the text you'll use" (i.e., no training) to intense workshops, courses and even internships required before and/or concurrent with any teaching assignment (DeBoer, 1979; Garland, 1983; Kaufman-Everett & Backlund, 1981). Training the GTAs properly before they enter the classroom may increase their knowledge of the specific subject matter to be taught, provide the variety of teaching techniques they need, help them anticipate management problems and create possible solutions, etc. Supervision of their work while teaching may provide them with additional support and continue the learning process.

With such training and supervision, it could be expected that the GTAs might develop a more positive attitude toward their teaching assignment. Training and supervision may send a message to the GTA that valuable department resources are being devoted to them indicating the importance of their role. Also, a poor attitude could result from tension over the potential effectiveness of the GTAs as teachers. Indeed, they may have been the students with the sour expressions sometime in their undergraduate careers! In a national survey, over one-half of the GTAs felt that they were not adequately prepared for college teaching (Kaufman-Everett & Backlund, 1981). Certainly, as the GTAs become more confident in their abilities and, hopefully, if they are taught by a competent and enthusiastic person, the positive atmosphere surrounding their training may encourage the development of a positive attitude by the GTAs.

The Use of Undergraduate Teaching Assistants

While the use of GTAs as classroom instructors has been implemented for quite some time, the extensive use of undergraduate teaching assistants is relatively new in our field (Lerstrom, 1985). The systematic use of UTAs in speech communication probably coincided with an interest in using adaptations of Keller's Personalized System of Instruction (PSI) in the basic course. Long used in fields such as psychology, mathematics, biology, etc. (Boylan, 1980; Fuss-Reineck & Seiler, 1982), the PSI system incorporates the use of "student proctors" as one of five integral parts of the model. (For more information concerning PSI, see Keller, 1974; Keller & Sherman, 1974, 1982; Sherman, 1974; Sherman, Ruskin, & Semb, 1982.) Recently, more researchers have begun to use PSI-based models, adapted to the needs of a performance-oriented course such as the traditional basic course in speech communication. (For more information concerning

some of the applications of PSI in communication courses, see Berryman-Fink & Pederson, 1981; Buerkel-Rothfuss & Yerby, 1982; Fuss-Reineck & Seiler, 1982; Gray, 1984; Gray, Buerkel-Rothfuss, & Thomas, 1987; Gray, Buerkel-Rothfuss, & Yerby, 1986; Hanisko, Beall, Prentice, & Seiler, 1982; Hanna & Gibson, 1983; Heun, Heun, & Ratcliff, 1976; Scott & Young, 1976; Staton-Spicer & Bassett, 1980; and Taylor, 1986.)

As with GTAs, the use of UTAs has much to offer our field. Again, the health of departments could be enhanced through the use of UTAs. Experiments using UTAs have included expanded class size, with one instructor to a class size that could reach one hundred or more (Baisinger, et al., 1984) . The use of UTAs in smaller subgroups, usually with one UTA to every five to ten students (Keller & Sherman, 1982, p. 19; Smith & Weitzer, 1978, p. 84), allows close contact with students and frees the instructor to deal with individualized problems as needed. The efficient use of instructor time also can free faculty to conduct research, teach upper-level courses, and perform services to the department and university through advising, committee work, etc. (Baisinger et al., 1984). Using undergraduates in such close contact with faculty also increases the feedback faculty get from informed and concerned students regarding the effectiveness of the basic course from a student perspective.

There is one other benefit to the department that can be realized through the use of UTAs. Many majors and minors join departments in our field after working as a UTA (Baisinger et al., 1984). It seems that the close involvement with the content, the satisfaction of performing at this high level of responsibility, and the increased self-esteem that can come from such a task has increased the overall excitement such students have for the field as a whole. At Central Michigan University (CMU), we have experienced an increased enrollment in our graduate program, too. Previously, a few graduate assistantships were given to graduate students in related areas, such as communication disorders and broadcasting. Currently, we have more qualified applicants than we have assistantships. Much of this increased enthusiasm can be traced to the use of our undergraduates as UTAs in the basic course. Needless to say, this increase in a somewhat experienced pool of potential GTAs makes us believe that the quality of our basic course cannot help but improve.

As with the use of GTAs, the basic course students benefit from the use of UTAs, too. The UTAs also have the enthusiasm and interest typical of new instructors. Since they are assigned only a small number of students, usually between five and ten, they can concentrate their efforts on these few people. They give more personalized attention to the students and the students get to ask questions, process activities, etc. in a small, non-threatening group. Often, these groups remain intact for the term/semester, and so the group members develop a support system that

is unlikely to develop in a larger section.

The UTAs are true peers of the basic course students. Often, they have just completed the course themselves within one or two years. Therefore, they are empathetic to the needs and frustrations the students have about the course. It may be easier for the UTAs to spot problems in the making than it is for an experienced faculty member who may have trouble recalling those feelings of intimidation and insecurity so many students in the basic course feel. Also, the use of small subgroups means that students have the opportunity to participate more frequently; this well may encourage students to be prepared by reading, etc. since the potential to "hide" in a large group is lost (Lerstrom, 1985).

As with the GTAs, the UTAs have a lot to gain from this experience, also. The UTAs also gain teaching and/or tutoring experience. This gives them an opportunity to function in a responsible position that helps develop leadership skills, organizational skills, conflict-management skills, etc. (Baisinger et al., 1984). UTAs often find that they understand the process of communication more, develop better all-around study skills, have a greater understanding of the teaching role, have improved academic performance since they become better critics and evaluators, and they learn about themselves and their relationships with others. This experience also makes the communication content more clear to them. It allows these students to learn the material in a different way, since now they may have to be able to answer unanticipated questions about it, coach students individually concerning specific applications of the material, etc. As with the GTAs, the personal and career benefits to the UTAs are great. "Nearly all [undergraduate] teaching assistants have experienced a satisfying growth in self-confidence and personal trust. Many of the assistants will be able to apply what they have learned about teaching, leadership, and human relations in their future careers" (Baisinger et al., 1984, pp. 62-63).

Of a more pragmatic nature, the UTAs may experience still another benefit. Some UTAs receive remuneration for their services. Either through work-study funds or departmental or other university funds, students may be paid a wage for their time. This can have the advantage of keeping the relationship on a professional level just like any other employment experience (Lerstrom, 1985). In many cases, it is possible, if not mandatory, to get course credit for work as a UTA that may be applied toward a major or minor or a degree (Lerstrom, 1985). The enrollment in a course gives the students academic credit for this experience and allows the department control over the UTA's performance through the formal evaluation process called for in any academic course.

While the use of GTAs has become an accepted part of our field, the use of UTAs has been slower in acceptance. Perhaps the monetary benefits are not as startling as with the GTAs, perhaps administrators and faculty

are more skeptical about the effectiveness of the UTAs in the classroom, etc. Whatever the reason or reasons, it would be foolish to think that UTAs have nothing to offer our field given the information just presented. However, it also would be foolish to think that there are no problems associated with the use of UTAs. Specifically, UTAs may have a lack of credibility, a lack of knowledge of content, a lack of teaching skills, and/or a poor attitude toward teaching.

The lack of credibility stated in the section on GTAs applies here, but may be heightened. A GTA at least has the credibility earning at least an undergraduate degree if not a Master's degree brings. The UTA is a peer, often the same age or even younger than the student in the basic course. Since the students know how little they know about the subject matter, it may be difficult for them to conceive of the UTA as being much more knowledgeable. The UTAs may lack the maturity that is needed to minimize this credibility problem. As with any instructor, the perception of an instructor with a hangover, drinking at a bar, talking to select students, etc. could cause resentment in the classroom. This can only be heightened with UTAs. If the UTA is given some authority in the classroom, as in grading, critiquing, giving out participation points, etc., students may resent being judged by peers they consider no more competent than themselves.

A lack of knowledge and skills can be a problem, too. It may be possible for a student to become a UTA with only the basic course or its equivalent as background in the field. Knowledge of the content may be limited to what is in the book and so students may feel talking with UTAs is a waste of their time. While many UTAs may not be called on to have and use the depth of knowledge the sole instructor of a class must have, such limited knowledge could prevent UTAs from giving the students effective direction and helping them apply ideas to new situations. Teaching skills also probably are limited. Many UTAs will have had no formal training in teaching prior to being a UTA. Further, related experiences well may be few, especially if the UTA is not a senior. This lack of understanding of the role of an instructor could present problems, such as empathizing too much with poor performance and problems of students and therefore undermine the usefulness and fairness of tests, speeches, reductions for lateness, etc. (Baisinger et al., 1984).

A poor attitude is the last area that could be problematic. Most UTAs are chosen as part of an elective program and therefore are not forced to serve as a UTA, so their attitudes are generally positive as they start this assignment. However, personal observation over five years has shown that these UTAs get frustrated easily when things don't go according to plan, tend to judge students as not trying, wasting the UTA's time, etc. when failure occurs, and tend to take such failure personally when failure does happen. As the semester/term wears on, the excitement can dissipate as

problems arise and as their other courses, etc. begin to compete for their time.

As with the GTAs, there are no simple answers to such problems, but, once again, potential solutions seems to lie with screening and training/supervision (Baisinger et al., 1984; Carroll, 1980). Screening can be undertaken to evaluate a student's preparedness for the task by looking at coursework, related experiences, etc. Since many UTAs are used in courses they themselves have taken, performance as a student in that course could be a telling sign of competence as could performance in a related course, the departmental major or minor and even overall grade point average. Recommendations that deal with characteristics associated with an effective facilitator, such as good interpersonal skills, reliability, desire, etc. could be an important source of information (Lerstrom, 1985). Lastly, since UTAs are easy to contact since they are current students, an interview which would allow a person knowledgeable about the job requirements of a UTA to ask some specific questions about attitudes, goals, etc. may be useful in spotting individuals without the desire and commitment to carry through with such a role.

In addition to screening, training and supervision once again seem to be needed. Undergraduate students need the structure and security some form of training provides. Structure in their role, training, monitoring, etc. is needed to provide the necessary guidance and supervision the UTAs need to function effectively (Baisinger et al., 1984).

Summary of InformationRegarding GTA and UTA use

The use of GTAs seems to be a part of our field that is essential to the well-being of departments and graduate education. Cost-effective instruction in the basic course, efficient use of faculty time, personal and career growth for the GTAs, benefits to the student, etc. all make the use of GTAs desirable in the basic course. Similarly, the use of UTAs seems to be an increasing trend in our field. Cost-effective instruction since class sizes can be increased, more personalized instruction for students since they are assigned to small UTA groups, increase in department majors/minors and even graduate enrollment, personal and career growth for the UTAs, benefits to the students, etc. all make the use of UTAs desirable in the basic course. The literature as well as five years of experimentation with GTAs and UTAs seems to call for ways to integrate both GTAs and UTAs to increase the effectiveness of instruction in the basic course. Many of the problems associated with the potential integration of GTAs and UTAs can be eased with screening techniques as well as effective training and supervision. Yet an extensive use of both GTAs and UTAs in the basic course in speech communication was not found through the literature review.

Some Potential Roadblocks to Integrating GTAs and UTAs

It may be useful to consider why this integration has not occurred. First, it may be that much more of this integration is being done but evidence of this just does not appear in the literature. Further investigation in this area may be useful to the field as a whole. Second, assuming that it is not being done to any great extent, it may be interesting to discover why this is so. An exploration into some possible reasons gives any department considering the incorporation of both GTAs and UTAs some things to ponder. The reasons may have to do with a general resistance to change due to a lack of departmental and faculty involvement and interest, a lack of financial commitment to the basic course, and/or the lack of expertise and commitment of the basic course directors.

One of the most apparent reasons why the innovative use of GTAs and UTAs is not widespread may have to do with resistance to change in the basic course on any level (Trank, 1985). The basic course consistently has been cited as a major factor influencing the health of departments in our field and, even more startling, it has been said by many that "the basic course plays a major role in American education" (p. 89). Yet this course which wields so much power in our field seems to get proportionately little attention. "The faculty in many speech communication departments do not see the basic course as a high priority item. The lack of participation and level of concern, interest, and commitment to other areas can inhibit faculty involvement in the basic course" (p. 87). This, in turn, "inhibits meaningful change" (p. 87). Change may require faculty who teach in the basic course to rethink their current lesson plans, etc. which takes time; time that is hard to find when the faculty may be very satisfied with things the way they are now.

When faculty and administrators think of change, money usually comes to mind. Certainly finances in higher education are not plentiful and, even when funds are available, faculty are reluctant to channel money into the basic course (Trank, 1985). It may be that any changes that take place in the near future need to keep costs to a minimum or, preferably, find ways to incorporate change that will be a financial plus to a department. The integration of GTAs and UTAs may be able to do just that.

One of the last reasons why change may be slow to take place has to do with the basic course directors' expertise. As Trank (1985) states, "many course directors never intended to become basic course directors. They have no training, no experience and, in some cases, little enthusiasm for directing the basic course" (p. 88). It is possible that basic course directors, who may have few specific qualifications for the job, may not have the expertise to initiate change. Any changes that call for the

introduction of and/or major changes in training programs may be extremely difficult for some directors and they may find "a limited corpus of published research to turn to for guidance in developing and implementing a methods course or supervisory procedures [for graduate teaching assistants]" (Knop & Herron, 1982, p. 329) and even less for the undergraduate teaching assistants since it is newer to our field. Coupled with the lack of interest and involvement of other faculty and administrators, basic course directors may be discouraged by the awesome task of change, especially if there seems to be no immediate rewards from colleagues, the administration, etc. The more immediate rewards of tenure and promotion that come from devoting time and energy to research rather than instructional development may be too enticing to resist. In addition, the lack of expertise of the basic course directors may be known to the rest of the faculty. This may make them reluctant to consider major changes in a course they feel is vital to the welfare of the department as a whole by someone who may not be capable of initiating and supervising new models.

From this previous research and our own insights into program needs, three broad goals emerged for the model that was to develop: 1) the model should incorporate GTAs and UTAs as much as possible given the available resources of students and faculty; 2) the model should meet the conditions for change outlined in this paper, specifically by trying to overcome the potential resistance to change by increasing the involvement of the faculty and administrators, being cost-effective, and having a systematic structure to help insure that change would not adversely affect the quality of the basic course; and 3) the model should incorporate screening and structured training and supervision for the GTAs and UTAs that specifies clear goals and common skills needed to be an effective GTA or UTA. The rest of this paper will describe the attempts of one mid-sized university to seek change in the basic course in speech communication by developing a model which meets these three broad goals.

Integrating GTAs, UTAs, and Interns: A Model

The Evolution of Instructional Formats

The basic course in the Department of Speech Communication and Dramatic Arts at CMU is a multiple-section hybrid course with a strong performance emphasis. Approximately 1,200 students enroll in the basic course, SDA 101 - Introduction to Interpersonal and Public Communication, each semester. The university has an "oral English" competency requirement for graduation; students must receive a C or better in one of six courses designated to meet this requirement. The basic course is the main course used to meet this competency, partly because we can offer

many more sections of this course since it primarily is staffed through the use of GTAs.

CMU has been using GTAs as instructors in the basic course for many years. At first, the GTAs taught three sections of the basic course with an average class size of 25 in a lecture-recitation format. Each section met twice a week with the GTA (or regular faculty member) in charge and the entire basic course population met once a week in a mass lecture situation conducted by various departmental faculty and even some experienced GTAs. Research showed us that the students did not feel that the mass lectures were beneficial so a new model was developed. Called the self-contained model, the class size was increased to 33 and each GTA was given two sections to teach instead of three. Since less standardization could be assured with the loss of the common mass lecture and since more responsibility was placed on the GTAs, the GTA training was gradually increased. The pre-semester training session was increased from one week to two weeks. Current student opinion surveys and informal discussions show a greater satisfaction with the course by the students and instructors and anecdotal data from the course director show fewer problems with the new training approach described later.

At about the time the basic course was undergoing the change just described, a new model was being experimented with in speech communication. The Personalized System of Instruction (PSI) model, begun by Fred S. Keller, had been used in education since 1964 (Keller, 1974). There are five defining characteristics of this model: 1) mastery learning, 2) self-pacing, 3) a stress on the written word, 4) the use of student proctors, and 5) the use of lectures to motivate rather than to supply essential information (Keller & Sherman, 1982, p. 22). The effectiveness of this model as an educational technique has been well-documented (Keller, 1974; Keller & Sherman, 1974, 1982; Sherman, 1974; Sherman, Ruskin, & Lazar, 1978; and Sherman, Ruskin, & Semb, 1982; Taveggia, 1976).

This instructional format had been considered an effective model mostly for courses with little interaction between students and students and instructor. Performance courses seemed beyond the scope of this instructional format (Fuss-Reineck & Seiler, 1982). However, innovators found ways to modify the model to make many of its characteristics work in a performance-oriented course (see Berryman-Fink & Pederson, 1981; Fuss-Reineck & Seiler, 1982; Hanisko, Beall, Prentice, & Seiler, 1982; Hanna & Gibson, 1983; Heun, Heun, & Ratcliff, 1976; Scott & Young, 1976; Seiler, 1982, 1983; Seiler & Fuss-Reineck, 1986; Staton-Spicer & Bassett, 1980; and Taylor, 1986).

Based on some of this work, a new model was developed at CMU (for a more complete description of this model and the features of the PSI system, see Gray, Buerkel-Rothfuss and Yerby, 1986). In this model, called

PSI-based, instructors taught classes of 45 to 75 (GTAs were given smaller classes than regular faculty members). With the increase in class size came the introduction of "student proctors" or UTAs. Undergraduate students were recruited to serve as UTAs. The two models were kept as close as possible in assignments. Both models took tests over the same material. At first, the testing situations were a bit different but the current model uses the same system of testing for both models: students take four unit tests at the university testing center. The tests are repeatable (10 forms of each test are available) within an established time frame (usually one month) and a specified level of competency must be met. Various incentives have been tried to increase the number of times a student takes a test, but the goal is to strive to achieve a minimum grade of 80 on each test. The written assignments and course policies are the same.

The real difference in evaluation lies in the performance aspect of the course. In the self-contained sections, students give three speeches; the first one is ungraded, the second one is worth 15% of the course grade and the third speech is worth 20% of the course grade. In the PSI-based sections, the students also give three speeches. The first two are evaluated by two UTAs and must receive at least a B from this evaluation or the speeches are repeated; no grade is recorded from these two speeches. The last speech is evaluated by the instructor and the grade received is worth 35% of the course grade.

Research has shown us that students in the PSI-based sections perform better academically, increase their self-perceptions of their communication competence and the value of the course, and like the course better than do students in the formerly used lecture-recitation format. While the newer self-contained format tries to incorporate more of the PSI-based characteristics, current research comparing these two formats shows the same result even though the difference between the two formats was reduced. The most important difference between the two models comes in the use of the UTAs (Buerkel-Rothfuss & Yerby, 1982; Gray, 1984, Gray et al., 1986; Gray et al., 1987); no UTAs were incorporated into the self-contained models, partly because of a potential lack of qualified UTAs and partly because it was felt that inexperienced GTAs may have trouble teaching as well as supervising the UTAs.

While developing instructional formats that seemed to keep the quality of the course high and increase the integration of GTAs and UTAs, attention was given to meeting the needs for change previously described: increasing the involvement of the faculty and administrators, being cost-effective, and having a systematic structure to help insure that change would not adversely affect the quality of the basic course .

Meeting the Needs for Change

A necessary feature of this model was faculty/administration involvement. (Please note that throughout this paper, "faculty" refer to the faculty members in one of two areas of the department, the interpersonal and public communication area. The other departmental faculty are in the theatre and interpretation area and are not included in this research.) This was sought in a few ways. For one thing, the criteria for evaluating the basic course director for tenure and promotion was assessed. The revision that is now in place calls for using criteria that goes beyond that used by the other faculty and included the performance as a basic course director as an integral component of the evaluation. This immediately placed the role of basic course director in a prominent position since it would mean constant evaluation of the basic course by the faculty and administrators as they sought to evaluate the director's job performance.

In addition, the basic course director made an effort to keep faculty informed and involved in decision-making about the course. Through changes concerning class size, training of GTAs and UTAs, the introduction of new instructional formats, etc., the faculty have been apprised of proposed changes, and discussions were held to answer questions, hear input, etc. before final revisions were made. One of the innovations, the use of a modified Personalized System of Instruction (PSI) model, caused much skepticism on the part of the faculty. However, little real opposition to testing the model was voiced, primarily, I would suspect, because the basic course director had made the faculty an integral part of previous changes and so the trust the faculty felt for the process made experimentation non-threatening since they knew they would have a chance to voice objections again if they felt the new model did not work.

Another way faculty input was sought was within the models themselves. The PSI-based system called for managerial and instructional skills of a mature nature and so faculty instructors were sought. The "converts" to the PSI-based system that resulted from the experimentation with this model helped to convince the rest of the faculty that the model was an effective one. The ongoing use of faculty in this system helps to insure that involvement and interest on the part of the faculty is kept high.

One more way of involving faculty was used: the training of the GTAs and UTAs became more and more important as each group was given more responsibility. Including more faculty in the training process seemed to serve two purposes: include more faculty in the basic course and get help with the training programs needed. However, just the inclusion of more faculty in areas related to the basic course was not enough. The use of a new model required the recruitment of faculty who

would see this as a challenge and a worthwhile way to spend their time. As Carroll (1980) stated: "Faculty interest and participation are absolutely essential if TAs [undergraduate and graduate teaching assistants] are to take the program seriously. TAs take their cues from their instructors, advisors, and mentors. They will readily detect a lack of faculty participation in training programs and will revise their priorities accordingly" (p. 179). The basic course director challenged two regular faculty members excited about the prospective benefits of the new model to initiate, lead, and evaluate the needed screening and instruction of the GTAs and UTAs. Thus the basic course now involved more than just the director in a key position; the PSI-based model instructors and the GTA and UTA instructors also had a commitment of time and interest in the changes taking place in the basic course.

The next concern was money. Financially, our department was no better off than most departments in higher education. A twelve-hour teaching load, committee responsibilities in the department and university, graduate and undergraduate advising, as well as the pressure to publish made for a stressful situation for the faculty. Faculty members generally were satisfied with the way the basic course was taught so any changes that required financial commitments were going to be hard to justify. However, it was easy to convince the department that more integration of the GTAs and UTAs would help the department financially. First of all, the class size for the PSI-based sections taught by regular faculty more than doubles in size from a traditional 28 to over 65. Thus, the department agreed to allow any faculty teaching in the PSI-based model to count one section as the equivalent of two sections of course load. This cut the classroom contact hours in half and so had an initial appeal to faculty searching for ways to find time for research. It also was appealing to the department since, even with the doubling of course load, the enrollment figure of 65 exceeded the typical 56 students usually enrolled in a traditional section. When GTAs are used as instructors in the PSI-based format, the enrollment figures stay at the typical 33 or increase as high as 42.

Finances were involved in another aspect of the changed model. The literature as well as our own feelings dictated that effective screening and training and supervision techniques be employed. Therefore, a course was developed called classroom facilitation. This three-credit course included a two-day workshop prior to entering the classroom as well as almost three hours of instruction per week with a faculty member. The course met the needs for training and supervision mentioned above yet did not present a drain on department finances since the credit-hour generation from this course was equal to that of any other typical course in the department. If anything, the increase in majors/minors and graduate students experienced, we believe, as a direct result of this new

program, made our department an envious one in terms of demand and made our graduate program more cost-effective since it increased the size of our graduate classes without necessitating the inlcusion of new ones and without sacrificing the intimacy desired of classes at this level.

The third need for this model, the need for structure to help insure effective change by potentially inexperienced and even unqualified basic course directors, was not an issue in our case. The basic course director was capable and willing to make changes. However, the development of the model, once worked out, made for a model that could be copied elsewhere even by such inexperienced directors. We also sought to heed the advice of previous researchers and provide highly supervised experiences with specified goals and skills to aid the inexperienced GTAs and UTAs.

Once we were satisfied that the model would not detract from the quality of the basic course, attention was paid to enhancing the screening and the training and supervision of the GTAs and UTAs.

The Screening and Training and Supervision of GTAs

Graduate teaching assistants at CMU usually teach two sections of the basic course per semester. While some assistantships include duties as an assistant basic course director, work with the forensics team, etc., most of our 15-20 GTAs teach two sections of the basic course. This course, and every three-credit course in the department, meets for 150 minutes per week for fifteen weeks with the sixteenth week session being a two-hour block of time used for final examinations or a final class meeting. The course is a highly standardized course with a common syllabus (course policies, attendance, assignments, etc.), text, and student handbook. The tests are common to all sections and are taken at the university testing center. The GTAs are solely responsible for the instruction and evaluation in their sections.

The screening of the graduate student applicants has consisted of evaluations of transcripts and letters of recommendation conducted by a committee within the department. At this time, academic potential weighs the most in the decision for awarding assistantships. The Assistant Basic Course Director ususally is one of the more experienced GTAs, either having returned for a second year on the Master's program or having some teaching experience prior to entering the program, etc., if at all possible. This person serves as a liaison person between the other GTAs and the director and training instructor, prepares materials for the GTAs' use in the classroom, organizes a complex videotape assignment for the course, etc.

The training and supervision of the GTAs is extensive. The preparation starts the summer prior to beginning an assistantship.

Prospective GTAs are sent materials to read (the text and instructor's manual) and assignments to begin to prepare (a lesson plan, an exercise to be led, and a persuasive speech). The students enroll in a three-credit course (SDA 795: Seminar: Teaching College Speech) during the first semester they are GTAs. This course officially begins two weeks prior to the beginning of classes. During that time, the GTAs meet with the faculty instructor for approximately 8 1/2 hours a day for five days and for four hours on Saturday during the first week; the second week allows for two afternoons off for the GTAs to meet with advisors, to register, etc., and includes an all-day retreat away from campus to meet with returning GTAs and the basic course director and includes an optional gathering one evening to meet the departmental faculty. This makes a total of approximately 87 mandatory hours of instruction during the two-week workshop. Once the semester begins, students continue to meet for 75 minutes a week as part of this course requirement and they meet an additional 75 minutes per week in a staff meeting with all GTAs and the basic course director. The texts currently used in this training course are the two books used in the basic course which were written by faculty at CMU and so fit the specific needs of this basic course (Communication: Competencies and Contexts by Buerkel-Rothfuss, Random House, New York, 1985 and Handbook to Accompany Communication: Competencies and Contexts by Buerkel-Rothfuss, Gray, Ryner, and Bell, Morton, Englewood, Colorado,1987), the teacher's guide for this text (Instructor's Manual to Accompany Communication: Competencies and Contexts by Gray and Buerkel-Rothfuss, Random House, New York, 1985), and Teaching Tips by McKeachie (8th edition), D. C. Heath and Company, Lexington, Massachusetts, 1986.

The course is designed to meet six general goals: 1) to teach GTAs about the basic course requirements, policies, expectations, goals, etc. and to outline their role in the basic course; 2) to have the GTAs develop and reinforce their general skills in the content areas of the course as well as in the area of leadership (e.g., planning and leading lessons, leading exercises, leading discussions, using effective group leadership skills and strategies, monitoring group activities, giving constructive feedback, coaching speeches, asking questions, preparing and delivering a persuasive speech, writing a complete sentence outline for a speech, writing an audience analysis paper, etc.); 3) to help the GTAs discover and use a variety of teaching techniques effectively in their own sections (e.g., discussions, exercises, attention-getting devices, audio-visual materials, etc.); 4) to help the GTAs construct effective lesson plans (e.g., has clear goals, gets attention, gives a preview, organizes content, defines terms clearly, keeps students active, seeks student input, includes ways to check for understanding, summarizes, relates to past content and leads into future content, contains

administrative details, etc.); 5) to allow GTAs to explore classroom management strategies (e.g., grade challenges, students not paying attention, disruptive students, late assignments, attendance problems, motivating students, creating a positive climate, showing respect for students, confirming student input, maintaining a friendly attitude while not being their personal friend, etc.); and 6) to build the confidence of the GTAs (e.g., by intensive tutoring in weak areas, discussing concerns to make them feel confident they can handle situations that may arise, making sure they understand the course content and policies before entering the course, letting them practice their skills, reinforcing their abilities with positive and constructive feedback, assuring them that the training instructor and the basic course director are available for consultation at any time, etc.).

The formal evaluation of the GTAs in this course currently is done through the following assignments:

written lesson plan	20%
videotaped leading of a portion of the plan including leading an exercise	20%
persuasive speech (videotaped)	10%
complete sentence outline for speech compilation and leading of attention-getters for classroom use	10%
Audience analysis paper	10%
written lesson plan (must be approved by training instructor prior to observation in classroom by basic course director)	20%
participation, attendance, ungraded assignments, etc.	10%

Grades of A-F are given to these assignments. With the exception of the oral presentations, students can redo written work to achieve a better grade and are encouraged to do so. While this means considerable more work for the training instructor, it helps to assure that problem areas get strengthened and helps to build GTA confidence once they see that they can perform at a satisfactory level. Problems spotted through oral presentations are handled on a one-to-one basis by conferences, reviewing taped speeches, etc.

The ungraded assignments mentioned include the following:

1. Students are assigned one area of the text, usually 5-15 pages, for which they must become an "expert." This is the material their first lesson plan is based on and which serves as the basis for the videotaped mini-teaching assignment. In addition, they must make a presentation to

the class concerning this material. The presentation should include points they consider important to reinforce in class (which ones and why), points they would leave out (which ones and why), ideas for ways to teach the material (discussion topics, exercises, attention-getters, audio-visual materials, etc.), and at least one exercise that reinforces the content that is different from the one led in the videotaped teaching.

2. Students must attend a conference with the basic course director after the observation in the classroom during the semester to discuss the observation.
3. Students must lead a critique session of a peer's persuasive speech.

In addition to the above evaluation methods, the GTAs are evaluated at approximately half-way through the first semester by faculty members individually and then the faculty as a whole. While academic progress is the main focus of this evaluation, concerns about teaching, if present, are raised at this time and options for helping the GTA improve are sought.

The GTAs are formally evaluated at the end of each semester through standardized university student opinion surveys and the GTAs are highly encouraged to seek informal feedback from students throughout the semester through discussions and short forms to be used for their own personal growth. From the beginning of their training, the GTAs are told that every effort will be made to help them improve on weak areas and that removing students from an assistantship will be done only as a final step. If they are willing to work to improve, the director usually can find ways to strengthen weak areas. In the past, GTAs have been asked to work individually with the director and/or training instructor, watch and critique taped speeches, team-teach with a more experienced GTA, etc. To make sure that the GTAs know what is expected of them as a GTA, a contract is reviewed and signed by each GTA detailing all job expectations (e.g., honor a dress code, keep a minimum of 5 office hours per week, critique and return papers within a reasonable amount of time, etc.).

The Screening and Training and Supervision of UTAs

The role of the UTA is a varied one. Each UTA is assigned to a section in the PSI-based model which is taught by a regular faculty member or an experienced GTA. Within that section, each UTA is assigned further to a small group, usually of about seven students. The UTAs serve as coaches and facilitators in this group. They lead and process exercises, answer questions concerning the material, give individual coaching on speeches and generally give the students help in any way possible. They are expected to try to handle problems that arise on their own even though the training instructor and other UTAs are available for help in deciding on strategies for problem-solving. Of course, problems that mean interpreting course policy or that require expertise truly outside of the

abilities of a UTA are referred to the course instructor. UTAs also plan and lead lessons for large sections of the class when the instructor and some class members are listening to the third speeches.

Since the UTAs perform a vital role in the PSI-based sections, recruitment of quality UTAs is a priority. Careful screening is done by the training instructor, who is a regular faculty member. Screening begins in the first half of the semester preceding the possible UTA assignment. Announcements are made to current basic course students, students in our major/minor courses, flyers are sent out to be read to classes with our majors and minors, and faculty are encouraged to approach students individually if they feel he/she would make a good UTA.

Prospective students are asked to interview with the training instructor and any possible reservations are discussed openly with candidates. The criteria used for selection include an overall grade point average (GPA) of 2.5; a GPA of 3.0 in at least six hours of departmental courses; completion of the basic course or its equivalent; background in departmental courses and/or related activities (e.g., the forensics team, Resident Hall advisor, tutoring, etc.); recommendations from faculty members attesting to an understanding of basic communication processes, interpersonal and public speaking skills, personal qualities such as reliable, responsible, committed, cooperative, etc.; an impression made in the interview in terms of the previously stated qualities as well as maturity, leadership potential, and motivation. Once accepted, the students enroll in a three-credit course (IPC 495: Communication Facilitation) during the semester they are UTAs. UTAs meet for a two half-day workshop prior to the beginning of classes. In the approximately eight hours of contact time through the workshop, the UTAs meet with the faculty training instructor for approximately four hours a day to go over course requirements, their role as UTAs, and general questions they have as well as meet with their section instructor so they are prepared to attend class the first day. Once the semester begins, students continue to meet for 150 minutes a week as part of this course requirement and they usually have an additional meeting with their section instructor. In addition, they must attend every class meeting of the section to which they are assigned. The texts currently used in this training course are the two books used in the basic course (Communication: Competencies and Contexts by Buerkel-Rothfuss, Random House, New York, 1985 and Handbook to Accompany Communication: Competencies and Contexts by Buerkel-Rothfuss, Gray, Ryner, and Bell, Morton, Englewood, Colorado,1987) and The UTA Handbook by Yerby, a packet compiled specifically for this training course.

In addition, students can apply to serve as a UTA Coordinator once they have been a UTA. The UTA Coordinators are chosen by the training instructor from the best UTAs. These students take the training course

again and serve as an intern in that course. They teach lessons in the training course; interview the UTAs for problems, to assess growth, etc.; critique the UTA journal and self-assessment paper to provide feedback to the UTAs; provide advice to the UTAs; fill in for UTAs who are ill, where possible; and serve as a liaison between the training instructor and the UTAs.

The general goals are virtually the same for the UTAs as for the GTAs. Minor differences in the specifics to meet the details of the UTA role and the depth of the instruction to meet the needs and abilities of undergraduate students are apparent. The course is designed to meet six general goals: 1) to teach UTAs about the basic course requirements, policies, expectations, goals, etc. and to outline their role in the basic course; 2) to have the UTAs develop and reinforce their general skills in the content areas of the course as well as in the area of leadership (e.g., planning and leading lessons, leading exercises, leading discussions, using effective group leadership skills and strategies, monitoring group activities, giving constructive feedback, coaching speeches, asking questions, etc.); 3) to help the UTAs discover and use a variety of teaching techniques effectively in their own sections (e.g., discussions, exercises, audio-visual materials, etc.); 4) to help the UTAs construct effective lesson plans (e.g., has clear goals, gets attention, gives a preview, organizes content, defines terms clearly, keeps students active, seeks student input, includes ways to check for understanding, summarizes, relates to past content and leads into future content, contains administrative details, etc.); 5) to allow UTAs to explore classroom management strategies (e.g., grade challenges, students not paying attention, disruptive students, late assignments, attendance problems, motivating students, creating a positive climate, showing respect for students, confirming student input, maintaining a friendly attitude while not being their personal friend, etc.); and 6) to build the confidence of the UTAs (e.g., by intensive tutoring in weak areas, discussing concerns to make them feel confident they can handle situations that may arise, making sure they understand the course content and policies before entering the course, letting them practice their skills, reinforcing their abilities with positive and constructive feedback, assuring them that the training instructor and the course instructors are available for consultation at any time, etc.).

The formal evaluation of the UTAs in this course currently is done through the following assignments:

lesson plan #1 (description of lesson to be done in their group)	20%
lesson plan #2 and leading (done in the training class)	20%
lesson plan #3 (plan to be done in the basic course)	20%
journal and self-assessment paper (reflect on reactions, skills, suggestions, and learning as a UTA)	20%
participation	20%
ungraded assignments	credit/no credit

Grades of A-F are given to these assignments. Problems spotted through oral presentations are handled on a one-to-one basis by conferences, reviewing taped speeches, etc.

The ungraded assignments mentioned include the following:

1. Students are asked to complete at least one interview with a UTA Assistant Coordinator where personal progress is assessed, goals are set, questions are answered, etc.
2. The journals must be turned in twice prior to formal grading by the instructor; the UTA Coordinators give feedback on the journals during these ungraded evaluations.

Other expectations for the course include the following:

1. Read and sign the UTA Contract detailing all job expectations for the UTA.
2. A poor evaluation by the training instructor or a serious deficiency in the performance of a major assignment or in elements of the UTA Contract may mean that the course grade will be lowered.
3. Students who miss more than three class periods (basic course and training course combined), who violate the UTA Contract and/or receive poor evaluation can expect no better than a D in the course.

In addition to the above evaluation methods, the UTAs are evaluated at approximately half-way through the first semester by the course instructors of the section to which they are assigned. The UTAs are formally evaluated at the end of each semester through a question at the end of the standardized university student opinion surveys used to evaluate the course instructor. In addition, the UTAs are highly encouraged to seek informal feedback from students throughout the semester through discussions and short forms to be used for their own personal growth. From the beginning of their training, the UTAs are told that every effort will be made to help them improve on weak areas and

that removing students from an assignment will be done only as a final step. If they are willing to work to improve, the director usually can find ways to strengthen weak areas. In the past, UTAs have been asked to work individually with the training instructor and/or course instructor, watch and critique taped speeches, etc.

The UTA Coordinators develop their specific job descriptions as the course progresses and needs and talents surface. In general, they currently complete two formal assignments: a written paper identifying goals for the semester and a journal and self-assessment paper turned in at the end of the semester. In addition, they plan and lead lessons in the UTA training course and they complete all or part of (depending on the grade they wish to receive) a list of possible job tasks (hold office hours for UTAs, develop resources, etc.); these enter into the formal evaluation, too. The UTA Coordinators meet with the training instructor weekly outside of class and receive a lot of personal feedback about their work with the UTAs.

One major reason for the development of the PSI-based model was in response to the exciting changes being discussed in the literature of our field concerning the incorporation of UTAs. The positive rewards of the use of UTAs discussed previously (benefits to the UTAs, increased interest in our major/minor and graduate program, etc.) has been confirmed through our own observations of our program. As stated previously, through research, we also have confirmed that the students in the PSI-based sections perform better academically and their self-perceptions concerning their overall competence as a communicator increase more than do students in the lecture-recitation or the self-contained sections and the students in the PSI-based sections liked the course more. Further, formal interviews with students resulted in one major reason for this progress in the students' eyes: the use of UTAs (Gray, 1984). The students did not feel lost in the large sections; to the contrary, the small UTA groups made the students feel like they got individualized help and support and so they felt the course was <u>less</u> impersonal in the larger sections!

This belief in the value of the UTAs caused a predicament for the director and training staff. A review of the PSI literature made us wary about using UTAs with relatively inexperienced GTAs. The need for strong interpersonal and managerial skills of a mature nature made us wonder whether we would ever be able to use UTAs in every basic course section (e.g., Gallup, 1974; Johnson, 1982; Keller & Sherman, 1982, pp. 42-45; and Smith & Weitzer, 1978, pp. 77-87). As an interim step, we turned to yet another course in place in our curriculum for another type of undergraduate teaching assistant: the secondary methods course (SDA 492: Speech Methods in Secondary School).

The Screening and Training and Supervision of Interns

Enrollment in this course is open to all students in secondary education who major or minor in "speech" (defined by the state as speech communication, theatre arts, and/or broadcasting). This course usually is taken the winter semester prior to student teaching. Currently, a minimum grade of C is needed in this course in order to be eligible to student teach. In addition, the department is asked to support or deny prospective student teachers before they are placed and performance in this course is the main focus of this evaluation. Since this is a required course for secondary students, no screening can take place. However, the importance of this course in their education program and the close placement of this course to their actual student teaching placement make for highly motivated students as a rule. By far, most of the students enrolled in this course are undergraduates, but the recent renewal of interest in education has caused some graduates to return seeking secondary certification and so a few graduate students do enroll in this course. Since the primary function of the course is as part of an undergraduate program in education and the course requirements and expectations are geared to that level, the term undergraduate will be used in reference to these students.

The course is a four-credit course. Students meet with the course instructor for 150 minutes a week. In addition, they are assigned to serve as an "intern" in a section of the basic course taught by a GTA. They must attend all classes of the basic course and they usually meet with their assigned GTA once a week. Their broad duties are much like the UTAs': they help facilitate exercises, work with students individually, occasionally lead exercises and teach lessons, aid in discussions, critique speeches, etc. The difference comes in the scope of their responsibilities. The interns are not assigned to any group of students but act as a general aid to the GTA and the class as a whole.

This methods course has been part of our curriculum far longer than has the PSI-based model. However, with the increased belief in the potential of the use of UTAs, we tried to refocus this course. The general goal always has been and remains to help students develop the skills and understandings necessary to teach effectively at the high school level. However, now more attention was given to make the interns a more vital part of the basic course rather than only using the internship as a way for students to develop their general teaching skills. This required only two small adjustments: 1) making sure that the training was similar to that being done in the GTA and UTA courses so that a commonality of philosophies would make integration of any combination of GTA, UTA, and intern possible and 2) encouraging the interns to become a part of the interpersonal climate of the basic course section by meeting with

students outside of class as a coach, teaching/leading more in class, working with small groups during exercises, etc. In other words, each intern was encouraged to become more than just an outsider who occasionally led a lesson.

The text currently used in this training course is a popular high school text, Person To Person by Galvin and Book, National Textbook Company, Lincolnwood, Illinois, 1984. In addition, interns must have access to the two books used in the basic course (Communication: Competencies and Contexts by Buerkel-Rothfuss, Random House, New York, 1985 and Handbook to Accompany Communication: Competencies and Contexts by Buerkel-Rothfuss, Gray, Ryner, and Bell, Morton, Englewood, Colorado,1987). This is usually accomplished by sharing copies among students, borrowing copies from GTAs, or using the copies on reserve for this training course in our departmental resource room.

The general goals are virtually the same for the UTAs as for the GTAs. Minor differences in the specifics to meet the needs of their future role as high school teachers and the depth of the instruction to meet the needs and abilities of undergraduate students serving in the limited capacity of an intern are apparent. The course is designed to meet six general goals: 1) to teach interns about the basic course requirements, policies, expectations, goals, etc. and to outline their role in the basic course and to teach them about developing such requirements, policies, etc. for future use in a high school; 2) to have the interns develop and reinforce their general skills in the content areas of the course as well as in the area of leadership (e.g., planning and leading lessons, leading exercises, leading discussions, using effective group leadership skills and strategies, monitoring group activities, giving constructive feedback, coaching speeches, asking questions, etc.) and to help them see how these skills can be used in a high school setting; 3) to help the interns discover and use a variety of teaching techniques effectively in their own sections (e.g., discussions, exercises, audio-visual materials, etc.) and to help them see how these techniques may be used in a high school classroom; 4) to help the interns construct effective lesson plans (e.g., has clear goals, gets attention, gives a preview, organizes content, defines terms clearly, keeps students active, seeks student input, includes ways to check for understanding, summarizes, relates to past content and leads into future content, contains administrative details, etc.), 5) to allow interns to explore classroom management strategies (e.g., grade challenges, students not paying attention, disruptive students, late assignments, attendance problems, motivating students, creating a positive climate, showing respect for students, confirming student input, maintaining a friendly attitude while not being their personal friend, dealing with social issues (e.g., drugs, pregnancy, etc.), dealing with paperwork, etc.), and 6) to build the confidence of the interns (e.g., by intensive tutoring in weak areas,

discussing concerns to make them feel confident they can handle situations that may arise, making sure they understand the course content and policies, letting them practice their skills, reinforcing their abilities with positive and constructive feedback, assuring them that the training instructor and the course instructors are available for consultation at any time, collecting and developing resources for use in the high school classroom, etc.).

The formal evaluation of the interns in this course currently is done through the following assignments:

work as an intern in the basic course	20%
written activity plan and leading of the exercise	10%
written plan and delivery of a speech	10%
develop an activity file	20%
written lesson plan (3-week unit) for use in a high school	20%
written assignment (choice of text evaluation, critique of a teacher, or interview with a teacher or administrator)	10%
participation, attendance, ungraded assignments	10%

Grades of A-F are given to these assignments. With the exception of the oral presentations and work as an intern, students can redo written work to achieve a better grade and are encouraged to do so. While this means considerable more work for the training instructor, it helps to assure that problem areas get strengthened and helps to build the interns' confidence once they see that they can perform at a satisfactory level. Problems spotted through oral presentations are handled on a one-to-one basis by conferences, reviewing taped speeches, etc.

The ungraded assignments mentioned include the following:

1. Students are asked to review their thoughts, notes from other courses, etc. in order to identify some discipline methods for discussion in class; each person presents at least one "good idea" to the class.
2. Students are asked to fill out informal evaluations of their progress, their satisfaction with the training course, etc. periodically throughout the semester.
3. Students are asked to try out different types of critique forms for speeches in their section of the basic course and report to the class regarding their assessment of the various forms.

Other expectations for the course include the following:

1. Read and sign the Intern Contract detailing all possible job tasks for

the intern. (Please note that, since the interns come with a wide variety of backgrounds, skills, etc. and no screening is possible, expectations vary from individual to individual and specific expectations are finalized as familiarity with the students on an individual basis increases.) This contract is signed by the course instructor (GTA) at the end of the semester verifying the tasks and commenting on the quality of the intern's performance.

2. Students are encouraged to keep at least one office hour per week to meet with the students in their section of the basic course for coaching, etc.

In addition to the above evaluation methods, the interns are evaluated at approximately half-way through the first semester by the course instructors of the section to which they are assigned. The interns are formally evaluated at the end of each semester by the basic course instructor through a verification of the intern contract as well as a formal letter written as a recommendation would be written. In addition, the interns are highly encouraged to seek informal feedback from their GTA to be used for their own personal growth. As with the GTAs and UTAs, from the beginning of their training, the interns are told that every effort will be made to help them improve on weak areas and that removing students from an assignment will be done only as a final step. If they are willing to work to improve, the training instructor usually can find ways to strengthen weak areas. In the past, interns have been asked to work individually with the training instructor and/or course instructor, watch and critique taped speeches, etc.

Summary and a Future Model

When assessing the model we are currently using, we are satisfied with it's effectiveness. We have integrated GTAs, UTAs and interns into our basic course and research implies that the students are learning more and are more satisfies with this integration. The department is satisfied with their involvement, the cost-effectiveness of the model and they are satisfied that the quality of instruction has improved overall with this structured program. The screening and training and supervision of the GTAs, UTAs and interns is lengthy and seems to be working. However, even though the three broad goals set for this project were met to a satisfactory level, more change is indicated. The development of better screening devices are being sought, ways to evaluate the performance of the GTAs, UTAs and interns are being compiled and created and, most of all, ways to integrate UTAs into more sections is being devised.

In the Winter semester of 1988, we will try another model in the basic course. This model will incorporate UTAs into many of the GTA-taught sections. The plan is to use three UTAs per section, which

would mean assigning 11 students to each UTA. In course sections where there are no UTAs, either because of a lack of UTAs or preference of the GTAs since participation will be voluntary for the GTAs, interns will be assigned.

Hopefully, there will be some advantages to the GTAs. The use of UTAs and interns may help to compensate for the lack of experience and confidence of the GTAs by having other authority figures to share ideas with. More UTAs and interns in a section should provide the GTA with more freedom since the UTAs and interns would teach some lessons, lead some exercises, tutor students, etc.; this extra time could be spent in course planning, meeting with students, etc. The GTAs also should develop skills that will be useful to them in future careers, such as in organization, management and supervision because of their role as overseers of the UTAs and interns.

The UTAs and interns should benefit, too. They will have an opportunity to work as a colleague in a peer-teaching environment. Since working with a GTA instead of a regular faculty member as an authority figure may be less threatening to them, the UTAs and interns may take on more responsibility and take more risks in such an environment. They also may develop the ability to work in a team situation. It is possible that the UTAs and interns may be motivated to further their education in graduate school as they may view the GTA as a positive role model to emulate.

In addition, the basic course students may benefit for this new model. More peer tutors may be useful to them as a nonthreatening way to seek coaching, have questions answered, etc. The use of UTAs and interns may help to develop a more positive classroom climate since more individual attention will be possible. The students may enjoy the potentially high level of enthusiasm new teachers bring to their roles, feel validated by the empathy the UTAs and interns can show since they are true peers of the students, and learn more in the course since their chances to participate are higher with the use of smaller subgroups.

The use of more UTAs and interns in this new model is not without potential problems. The lack of administrative, managerial, supervisory, and problem-solving skills of the GTAs could be problematic. It is possible that the close relationship between GTAs, UTAs, and interns could cause a competitive climate among the authority figures which could make for an uncomfortable classroom atmosphere. Further, the potential lack of flexibility often seen in inexperienced teachers could make the use of so many authority figures an ineffective combination.

However, even with the potential problems outlined, we feel compelled by the research done by ourselves and others to try to integrate GTAs, UTAs, and interns as much as possible. The problems described may be overcome by the same criteria we have applied all along: careful screening and structured training and supervision. In addition, we plan to

heed the advice of many researchers in the field of teaching assistant training and continue to explore the effects of our changes through systematic research (Bray & Howard, 1980; Carroll, 1980; Sharp, 1981). Finding and creating ways to assess the academic impact of changes in the model, ways to assess the effects of the changes on satisfaction, self-perceptions of communication abilities, etc. and trying to develop ways to identify the skill levels of GTAs, UTAs, and interns so that training can be tailored to a "personalized" course of action all will be continued. The potential benefits anticipated from integrating GTAs, UTAs, and interns are too exciting to ignore. We owe it to our departments, to our basic course directors, to our faculty, to our graduate and undergraduate students and, perhaps most importantly, to our basic course students to seek changes in the basic course in speech communication that will maximize the effectiveness of this all-important course.

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